



ATTENTION MEN!

Control Your Diabetes. For Life... And For Your Family.

by the National Diabetes Education Program

Almost 11 million men age 20 or older currently have diabetes in the United States. That's more than 10 percent of the total male U.S. population. Men with diabetes and their families can face devastating complications from diabetes, especially since people with diabetes are at a high risk for heart attack and stroke. Diabetes can also lead to blindness, kidney disease, loss of a toe or foot, and erectile dysfunction. But there is good news. Although diabetes is a serious disease, taking care of yourself and your diabetes can help you avoid long-term problems and live a long and healthy life.

Men with diabetes can lower their chances of having a heart attack, stroke, or other diabetes complications by managing the **ABCs of diabetes** – **A1C**, **B**lood Pressure, and **C**holesterol.

- **A is for the A1C test.** It measures your average blood glucose level over the past three months. The goal for most people with diabetes is below 7.
- **B is for blood pressure.** High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard. The goal for most people with diabetes is below 130/80.
- **C is for cholesterol.** Bad cholesterol, or LDL, builds up and clogs your arteries. The LDL goal for most people with diabetes is below 100.

It's essential for men with diabetes to take action to reach their ABC targets. Work with your health care team to develop a self-care plan. Ask your health care team about your ABC and blood glucose targets, how and when to test your blood glucose, and how to use the results to manage your diabetes. Take your medications even when you feel good and if you smoke, get help to quit. Use your diabetes meal plan and if you do not have one, talk to your health care team. Stay at a healthy weight by using your meal plan and moving more – try to get 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

Ask for the support of your family and loved ones and make managing your diabetes a family affair. Eat healthy foods together at meal times, such as fruits and vegetables, fish, lean meats, chicken or turkey without the skin, dry peas or beans, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese. Limit fried foods and avoid foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt. Drink water more often. If you don't normally help with grocery shopping or meal preparation, get involved! When eating out, take time to look over the menu and make healthy choices, such as starting with a salad or sharing an entree. Order the smallest size meal instead of the larger, super-sized versions at fast-food restaurants.

There are lots of things you can do with your family to be more physically active. Make a walking "date" with family members. For family fun, play soccer, basketball, or tag with your children. When you involve your family in your activities, you are more likely to stick to your program. Take action to manage your diabetes, not only for your own health, but for the health of your family.

To get your free copy of [*4 Steps to Control Your Diabetes. For Life.*](#) and more tips on how to manage your diabetes, contact the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-800-438-5383 or <http://www.ndep.nih.gov> and click on the [*Control Your Diabetes. For Life.*](#) campaign.

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